

THE NORTH CAROLINA TESTING PROGRAM 2012–2013



For additional information about the North Carolina Testing Program, visit the Accountability Services Division website at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/>.

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADES 3–8

Quick Facts about Testing at Grades 3–8:

- Students at grades 3, 4, 6, and 7 take end-of-grade tests in English language arts and mathematics during the last 15 days of the school year.
- Students at grades 5 and 8 take end-of-grade tests in English language arts, mathematics, and science during the last 15 days of the school year.
- A sample of students at grades 4 and 8 participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).
- Students at grade 8 take EXPLORE.
- Alternate assessments are available for many of the state tests for students with disabilities who have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).
- All students identified as limited English proficient must be annually assessed to determine progress and level of English language proficiency.

END-OF-GRADE TESTS (EOG) Basic Facts:

English Language Arts:

- The end-of-grade (EOG) English language arts tests at grades 3–8 are multiple-choice tests.
- The EOG English language arts assessments at grades 3–8 are available only in paper-and-pencil format for the 2012–13 school year.
- The tests are aligned to the *Common Core State Standards* (CCSS) for English language arts.
- Students read authentic selections and then answer questions related to the selections.
- The reading selections are comprised of literary and informational selections based on the *Common Core State Standards*.
- Knowledge of vocabulary is assessed indirectly through application and understanding of terms within the context of the selections and questions.
- The estimated time allotted for all EOG English language arts tests is 150 minutes; the maximum time allowed is 240 minutes.

Mathematics:

- The EOG mathematics tests at grades 3 and 4 are multiple-choice tests.
- The EOG mathematics tests at grades 5–8 are multiple-choice and gridded-response tests.
- The EOG mathematics tests at grades 3–8 are available only in paper-and-pencil format for the 2012–13 school year.

- All EOG mathematics tests are aligned to the *Common Core State Standards* (CCSS) for mathematics.
- For grades 3–8, the mathematics tests consist of two parts: calculator inactive and calculator active. Students are allowed to use calculators during the calculator active part of the test; students are not allowed to use calculators during the calculator inactive part of the test.
- The estimated time allotted for all EOG mathematics tests is 150 minutes; the maximum time allowed is 240 minutes.

Science:

- The EOG science tests at grades 5 and 8 are aligned to the *Essential Standards* for Science.
- Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) have the option of administering end-of-grade science tests in the online or paper-and pencil format; however, online testing is strongly encouraged.
- The online EOG science test questions are multiple-choice and technology enhanced questions.
- The paper-and-pencil science tests are multiple-choice tests (technology enhanced items are found only in the online science assessments).
- The estimated time allotted for the EOG science tests at grades 5 and 8 is 150 minutes; the maximum time allowed is 240 minutes.

EXPLORE[®]
Basic Facts:

- EXPLORE is a curriculum-based educational and career planning program for 8th graders that measures achievement in English, math, reading, and science.
- EXPLORE includes four multiple-choice tests:
 - The EXPLORE English test measures understanding of standard written English—punctuation, grammar and usage, and sentence structure—and understanding of the use of strategy, organization, and style in writing.
 - The EXPLORE math test measures mathematical reasoning. Questions on the test cover four areas—knowledge and skills, direct application, understanding concepts, and integrating understanding of concepts—in pre-algebra, elementary algebra, geometry, and statistics and probability.
 - The EXPLORE reading test measures the student’s ability to understand written material from different school subjects. The skills measured include referring to details in the passage, drawing conclusions, and making comparisons and generalizations.
 - The EXPLORE science test measures scientific reasoning skills and the student’s ability to understand scientific information and draw conclusions from it. Six sets of scientific information are presented in one of three formats: data representation (graphs, tables, and other forms), research summaries (descriptions of several related experiments), or conflicting viewpoints (two or more hypotheses that are inconsistent with one another).

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP) Basic Facts:

- North Carolina has participated in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as the *Nation's Report Card*, for almost two decades.
- NAEP is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas.
- *No Child Left Behind* legislation mandates that all 50 states participate in NAEP.
- Selected fourth and eighth grade students participate in NAEP.
- State-level results are reported for grades 4, 8, and 12 in mathematics, reading, science, and writing. This allows comparisons among states and the nation.
- Selected students at ages 9 and 13 participate in NAEP Long-Term Trend (LLT) assessments. LLT assessments are administered every four years in mathematics and reading. Results are only reported at the national level. Measuring trends of student achievement or change over time requires the precise replication of past procedures. Therefore, the LLT instrument does not evolve based on changes in curricula or educational practices, unlike main NAEP.
- NAEP has special studies and assessments that are established by the National Assessment Governing Board.
- For additional information and access to NAEP related resources, visit <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/naep/naep>.

STATE-IDENTIFIED LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TESTING Basic Facts:

- North Carolina State Board of Education policy [GCS-K-000 \(16 NCAC 6D .0106\)](#) states that “a home language survey shall be administered to every student at the time of enrollment and maintained in the student's permanent record.”
- Language minority students are identified through a home language survey (HLS) process.
- Eligibility for being assessed on the WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT™) is based on results of the HLS process.
- The W-APT is administered to all eligible, initially enrolled language minority students (in kindergarten through grade twelve) within 30 calendar days after the beginning of the school year or within 14 calendar days of enrollment if the student is enrolled after the beginning of the school year.
- The W-APT is a screener that determines if the student is identified as limited English proficient (LEP). If the student is identified as LEP, the W-APT provides guidance concerning which tier (level) of the English Language proficiency test should be administered to the student. The score on the W-APT also determines eligibility for state LEP testing accommodations.
- The HLS process, identification, and subsequent placement of LEP students in English as a Second Language (ESL) services are guided at the state level by the NCDPI Curriculum and Instruction Division.

- The annual test, Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs[®]) is designed to satisfy NCLB requirements for Title III.
- Both the W-APT[™] and the ACCESS for ELLs[®] consist of four subtests that assess the student's English speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills.
- All students identified as limited English proficient must be administered the ACCESS for ELLs[®] during the annual testing window.
- The results from the annual administration of the state English language proficiency test are used to measure progress and proficiency of LEP students in the English language.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADES 9–12

Quick Facts about Testing at Grades 9–12:

- Students enrolled for credit in courses where end-of-course (EOC) tests are required must take the appropriate end-of-course test.
- EOC tests are given during the last 15 days of the instructional period for 4x4/semester courses or the last 20 days of the instructional period for traditional yearlong courses.
- Students at grade 10 take the PLAN in October.
- Students at grade 11 take the ACT in March.
- Students at grade 12 who are identified as Career and Technical Education concentrators are required to take the WorkKeys assessments.
- All students identified as limited English proficient must be annually assessed to determine progress and level of English language proficiency.
- A sample of students at grade 12 participates in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

END-OF-COURSE TESTS (EOC)

Basic Facts:

- For 2012–13, the end-of-course (EOC) tests are available for the following subjects: Biology, English II, Algebra I/Integrated I.
- Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) have the option of administering end-of-course tests in the online or paper-and-pencil format; however, online testing is strongly encouraged.
- The EOC tests are aligned to the *Common Core State Standards* (CCSS) for English language arts and mathematics and the North Carolina *Essential Standards* for science.
- The online English II test questions are multiple-choice, technology enhanced, and constructed response; the paper-and-pencil test questions are multiple-choice and constructed response (technology enhanced items are found only in the online English II test).
- The online and paper-and-pencil Algebra I/Integrated I test questions are multiple-choice and gridded response. The test consists of two parts: calculator inactive and calculator active. Students may use a calculator only for the calculator active part of the test.

- The online Biology test questions are multiple-choice and technology enhanced; the paper-and-pencil test questions are multiple-choice. Technology enhanced items are found only in the online Biology test.
- Per State Board of Education policy [GCS-C-003 \(16NCAC 6D.0305\)](#), schools are to use results from all EOC tests as at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the student's final grade for each respective course.
- The estimated time allotted for the EOC tests is 120 minutes; the maximum time allowed is 180 minutes.

PLAN[®] Basic Facts:

- PLAN is a curriculum-based educational and career planning program for 10th graders.
- PLAN includes four multiple-choice tests: English, math, reading, and science.
- The PLAN English test measures the student's understanding of standard written English—punctuation, grammar and usage, and sentence structure—and the use of strategy, organization, and style in writing.
- The PLAN mathematics test measures mathematical reasoning. The skills tested are those students learn in first- and second-year high school courses (pre-algebra, first-year algebra, and plane geometry).
- The PLAN reading test measures reading comprehension by focusing on skills such as: referring to details in a passage, drawing conclusions, and making comparisons and generalizations.
- The PLAN science test measures scientific reasoning skills based on materials that is typically taught in first- and second-year high school general science courses. The material includes topics in biology, chemistry, physics, geology, astronomy, and meteorology.

ACT[®] Basic Facts:

- The ACT is a curriculum- and standards-based assessment that evaluates 11th graders' general learning outcomes in English, mathematics, reading, science, and writing.
- The ACT is used as a college admissions and placement test and is accepted by all four-year colleges and universities in the United States.
- The English, mathematics, reading, and science tests are multiple-choice tests.
- The ACT writing test complements the English Test. The combined information from both tests tells postsecondary institutions about students' understanding of the conventions of standard written English and their ability to produce a direct sample of writing.
- The ACT also includes a career exploration component.

WorkKeys® Basic Facts:

- Students enrolled in grade 12, who are identified as Career and Technical Education concentrators, are required to complete the WorkKeys assessments.
- The three WorkKeys assessments are the basis of the *National Career Readiness Certificate* program.
- The three WorkKeys assessments are: Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information.
- The Applied Mathematics test measures the skill people use when they apply mathematical reasoning, critical thinking, and problem-solving techniques to work-related problems. The test questions require the examinee to set up and solve the types of problems and do the types of calculations that occur in the workplace. The test is designed to be taken with a calculator.
- The Locating Information test measures the skill people use when they work with workplace graphics. Examinees are asked to find information in a graphic or to insert information into a graphic. They also must compare, summarize, and analyze information found in related graphics.
- The Reading for Information test measures the skills people use when they read and use written text in order to do a job. The written texts include memos, letters, directions, signs, notices, bulletins, policies, and regulations.
- Students who achieve qualifying scores on the Applied Mathematics, Reading for Information, and Locating Information assessments can earn a North Carolina Career Readiness Certificate. Certificates provide employers with proof that students have the skills needed to do the jobs available.

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- North Carolina has participated in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as the *Nation's Report Card*, for almost two decades.
- NAEP is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas.
- *No Child Left Behind* legislation mandates that all 50 states participate in NAEP.
- Selected twelfth grade students participate in NAEP. Results for grade 12 are only reported at the national level.
- Selected students at ages 13 and 17 participate in NAEP Long-Term Trend (LLT) assessments. LLT assessments are administered every four years in mathematics and reading. Results are only reported at the national level. Measuring trends of student achievement or change over time requires the precise replication of past procedures. Therefore, the LTT instrument does not evolve based on changes in curricula or educational practices, unlike main NAEP.

- For additional information and access to NAEP related resources, visit <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/naep/naep>.

STATE-IDENTIFIED LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TESTING Basic Facts:

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- Language minority students are identified through a home language survey (HLS) process.
- Eligibility for being assessed on the WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT™) is based on results of the HLS process.
- The W-APT is administered to all eligible, initially enrolled language minority students (in kindergarten through grade twelve) within 30 calendar days after the beginning of the school year or within 14 calendar days of enrollment if the student is enrolled after the beginning of the school year.
- The W-APT is a screener that determines if the student is identified as limited English proficient (LEP). If the student is identified as LEP, the W-APT provides guidance concerning which tier (level) of the English Language proficiency test should be administered to the student. The score on the W-APT also determines eligibility for state LEP testing accommodations.
- The HLS process, identification, and subsequent placement of LEP students in English as a Second Language (ESL) services are guided at the state level by the NCDPI Curriculum and Instruction Division.
- The annual test, Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs®) is designed to satisfy NCLB requirements for Title III.
- Both the W-APT™ and the ACCESS for ELLs® consist of four subtests that assess the student’s English speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills.
- All students identified as limited English proficient must be administered the ACCESS for ELLs® during the annual testing window.
- The results from the annual administration of the state English language proficiency test are used to measure progress and proficiency of LEP students in the English language.

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS



NCEXTEND2—END-OF-GRADE Basic Facts:

- The *NCEXTEND2* for End-of-Grade (EOG) Tests is an alternate assessment for eligible students with disabilities who have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).
- The *NCEXTEND2* is designed for students who have current IEPs that include goals that are based on grade-level/course content standards and provide for monitoring of the students' progress in achieving those goals.
- The *NCEXTEND2* measures student performance against modified grade-level/course content academic achievement standards in the following subject areas:
 - English language arts at grades 3–8,
 - Mathematics at grades 3–8, and
 - Science at grades 5 and 8.
- The *NCEXTEND2* assessments are administered online, but paper-and-pencil versions are available.
- The *NCEXTEND2* uses simplified language, shorter passages, fewer items, and fewer answer choices compared to the standard EOG tests to assess students on grade-level concepts.
- The *NCEXTEND2* assessments are given during the last 25 days of the school year.

English language Arts:

- The *NCEXTEND2* English language arts tests are multiple-choice tests.
- Students read authentic selections and then answer questions related to the selections.
- The reading selections are comprised of literary and informational selections based on the Common Core State Standards.
- Knowledge of vocabulary is assessed indirectly through application and understanding of terms within the context of the selections and questions.

Mathematics:

- All *NCEXTEND2* mathematics tests are aligned to the *Common Core State Standards* for mathematics.
- The *NCEXTEND2* mathematics tests at grades 3 and 4 are multiple-choice tests.
- The *NCEXTEND2* mathematics tests at grades 5–8 are multiple-choice and gridded response tests.
- For grades 3–8, the mathematics tests consist of two parts: calculator inactive and calculator active. Students are allowed to use calculators during the calculator active part of the test; students are not allowed to use calculators during the calculator inactive part of the test.

Science:

- The *NCEXTEND2* science tests at grades 5 and 8 are aligned to the *Essential Standards* for Science.
- The online *NCEXTEND2* science test questions are multiple-choice and technology enhanced.
- The *NCEXTEND2* science paper-and-pencil versions are multiple-choice tests (technology enhanced items are found only in the online science assessments).

NCEXTEND2—END-OF-COURSE **Basic Facts:**

- The ***NCEXTEND2*** for End-of-Course (EOC) Tests is an alternate assessment for eligible students with disabilities who have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).
- The ***NCEXTEND2*** is designed for students who have current IEPs that include goals that are based on grade-level content standards and provide for monitoring of the students' progress in achieving those goals.
- The ***NCEXTEND2*** measures student performance against modified grade-level academic achievement standards in the following subject areas:
 - English II,
 - Algebra I/Integrated I, and
 - Biology.
- The ***NCEXTEND2*** assessments are administered online, but paper-and-pencil versions are available.
- The online ***NCEXTEND2*** English II assessment contains multiple-choice, technology enhanced, and constructed response questions. The paper-and pencil version has multiple-choice and constructed response questions (technology enhanced items are found only in the online assessment).
- The online and paper-and-pencil ***NCEXTEND2*** Algebra I/Integrated I mathematics assessments contain multiple-choice and gridded response questions.
- The online ***NCEXTEND2*** Biology assessment contains multiple-choice and technology enhanced questions. The paper-and pencil version has multiple-choice questions (technology enhanced items are found only in the online assessment).
- The ***NCEXTEND2*** EOCs are administered during the last 20 days of the instructional period for 4x4/semester courses or the last 25 days of the instructional period for traditional yearlong courses.
- The ***NCEXTEND2*** English II and Algebra I/Integrated I assessments are aligned to the 2010 Common Core State Standards; the ***NCEXTEND2*** Biology assessment is aligned to the 2009 North Carolina Essential Standards.

NCEXTEND1 **Basic Facts:**

- ***NCEXTEND1*** is designed for students with significant cognitive disabilities.
- The assessment process requires students to complete performance-based, multiple-choice items.
- Assessment items align with the North Carolina Extended Content Standards for the Common Core State Standards for English language arts and mathematics and the North Carolina Essential Standards for science.
- ***NCEXTEND1*** measures student performance in the following subject areas:
 - English language arts at grades 3–8, 10, and 11,
 - Mathematics at grades 3–8, 10, and 11, and

- Science at grades 5, 8, 10, and 11.
- The ***NCEXTENDI*** is designed for students with disabilities who:
 - have a current Individualized Education Program (IEP),
 - are enrolled in grades 3–8, 10 or 11 according to NC WISE,
 - are instructed in the North Carolina Extended Content Standards in all assessed content areas, and
 - have a *significant cognitive disability* (i.e., exhibit severe and pervasive delays in all areas of conceptual, linguistic, and academic development and also in adaptive behavior areas, such as communication, daily living skills, and self-care).
- The vast majority of students with disabilities do not have a significant cognitive disability. The ***NCEXTENDI*** is not appropriate for students who:
 - are being instructed in *any or all* of the general grade-level content standards of the Common Core State Standards or the Essential Standards;
 - demonstrate delays only in academic achievement;
 - demonstrate delays due primarily to behavioral issues;
 - demonstrate delays only in selected areas of academic achievement; or
 - if in high school, are pursuing a North Carolina high school diploma (including students enrolled in the Occupational Course of Study).
- The ***NCEXTENDI*** Alternate Assessment is designed for students who have a severe intellectual disability; it is **NOT** designed for students who have a specific learning disability.
- The ***NCEXTENDI*** takes place during a designated window beginning in April and concluding in June.